

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 EB-11 INT-08 SCEM-02 DRC-01

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R 021750Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9043

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USNATO BRUSSELS 2455

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 6248

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, BE

SUBJECT: BELGIAN PRESS SEES THREAT TO EUROPEAN UNITY IN DUTCH

OIL CRISIS

1. BELGIAN PRESS, ACROSS WIDE RANGE OF POLITICAL OPINION, IS
FOCUSING ON POTENTIAL POLITICAL IMPACT OF PETROLEUM SHORTAGES
ON EUROPE. SOCIALIST LE PEUPLE CONCISELY POSES PROBLEM BY POINTING OUT THAT EUROPEANS MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN AN "EVERYONE FOR HIMSELF" ATTITUDE IN WHICH DUTCH PARTNER MUST SHIFT FOR HIMSELF, OR RUN RISK OF ARAB RETALIATION BY SHARING SUPPLIES WITH DUTCH. CATHOLIC LA LIBRE BELGIQUE, ON OTHER HAND, MAINTAINS THAT CHOICE NEED NOT BE SO DRAMATIC IF EUROPE WILL ADOPT COMMON POLITICAL POSITION ON MIDDLE EAST AND ASSUME ROLE IN SEEKING PEACE

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SETTLEMENT FAIR TO BOTH SIDES.

2. CHRISTIAN LABOR HET VOLK MOST DIRECTLY CONFRONTS QUESTION OF EFFECTS ON EUROPEAN UNITY BY WARNING THAT "NETHERLANDS HAS APPEALED TO EC SOLIDARITY. IF THIS SOLIDARITY DOES NOT PLAY ITS ROLE

AT SUCH A CRITICAL MOMENT, IF ALL EC COUNTRIES HORTSIGHTEDLY AND EXCLUSIVELY THINK OF THEIR OWN TEMPORARY AND IMMEDIATE INTERESTS, THEN THIS BOYCOTT CAN MEAN BEGINNING OF COLLAPSE OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. NEEDLES TO ADD NATO ALLIANCE, AS A RESULT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS AMERICAN DURING ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, IS IN NO BETTER POSITION THAN EC..."

3. INDEPENDENT LE SOIR EXPRESSES VIEW THAT EUROPEAN UNITY WAS SLIGHTLY STRENGTHENED BY FACT THAT EC-9 TOOK COMMON POSITION IN CALLING FOR NEGOTIATED MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, BUT NOTES THAT THEIR SOLIDARITY MAY BE PUT TO RUDE TEST BY PETROLEUM CRISIS. LE SOIR INDICATES IT IS STILL OPEN QUESTION AS TO WHETHER EUROPEAN STATES WILL BE ABLE TO SURMOUNT THEIR DIFFERENCES OR WHETHER EACH WILL MAINTAIN INDEPENDENTLY, TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE COMMON INTEREST, THAT IT WAS RIGHT.

4. CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC GAZET VAN ANTWERPEN NOTES THAT IF EC DECIDES TO LIMIT PETROLEUM EXPORTS OUTSIDE COMMUNITY, THIS WILL BE TAKEN AS UNFRIENDLY ACT BY US, WHICH SHARED PETROLEUM WITH EUROPE DURING SUEZ CRISIS. PAPER ALSO CONCLUDES THAT ARAB BOYCOTT COULD SERVE AS MODEL FOR OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES..

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PETROLEUM RESERVES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BRUSSE06248
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731159/aaaabrlv.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Aug-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <26-Dec-2001 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BELGIAN PRESS SEES THREAT TO EUROPEAN UNITY IN DUTCH OIL CRISIS
TAGS: PFOR, BE, XG, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005